

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

September 25, 2015

An informational meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, June 26, 2015. Present at the meeting were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair and Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Commissioners Angelyne E. Cooper, Esq., Camille Vella-Wilkinson, Iraida Williams, Tolulope Kevin Olanoye, Esq. and Alberto Aponte Cardona, Esq. The meeting commenced at 12:35 p.m.

The minutes of August 28, 2015 were approved by the Director, Michael Evora. The Commissioners will review the minutes and make any amendments to the minutes at the next meeting on October 30, 2015.

Status Report of Michael D. Évora, Executive Director

A written report was handed out. All new information is in bold print.

Case Production Report – Attached

Aged Case Report – No aged cases to report.

Outreach Report – Attached

STATUS REPORT – COMMISSIONERS

OUTREACH: There was no outreach reported at this time

GENERAL STATUS: Dr. Susa approved sending a letter to the Governor requesting that Commissioner Camille Vella-Wilkinson be named Acting Chairperson until January 2017.

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STATUS REPORT – LEGAL COUNSEL: by Michael D. Evora.

LITIGATION: The Commissioners reviewed pending litigation in which the Commission has a role. Report attached.

LEGISLATION: No legislation to report at this time.

HEARING SCHEDULE/STATUS OF HEARING CASES: Executive

Director Evora discussed with the Commissioners the hearing schedule.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Commission is October 30, 2015 at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Michael D. Evora
Executive Director**

Notes taken by B. Ross

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS
25 September 2015**

I. BUDGET

S = State/General Revenue; F = Federal (EEOC/HUD); T = Total

FY 2016 FY 2016 FY 2016 FY 2017 FY 2017

(Req.) (Gov.Rec./Passed) (Rev. Req.) (Request) (Constr. Request)

S	1,231,273	1,252,174	1,247,562	1,261,749	1,181,192
F	319,355	295,386	310,874	323,295	323,295
T	1,550,628	1,548,010	1,558,436	1,585,044	1,504,487

The House Finance Subcommittee on General Government held a hearing on the Commission's FY15 (Revised) and FY16 (Recommended) budget proposals, Cynthia Hiatt attended the hearing in my absence, gave a brief overview of the Commission's accomplishments in FY14, and answered questions from Committee members.

The House and Senate passed the state's FY16 (and FY15 Final) budgets. The particulars for the Commission are highlighted above.

Betsy Ross, Chief Clerk, and I are in the process of working with our Budget Analyst on the Commission's FY16 (Revised) and FY17 (Request) submissions (due September 18). Per the Budget Instructions, every state agency is being asked to submit a two-tiered budget request for FY17, one assuming regular funding (unconstrained), and one assuming a 7.5% reduction in General Revenue (constrained). We also will be submitting Impact Statements advising the Governor, Budget Office and General Assembly of the impact that implementation of the constrained budget would have on our mission/strategic plan. The budget was submitted on September 17. The particulars are highlighted in bold above.

II. FEDERAL CONTRACTS

EEOC – For federal FY12 (ending September 30, 2012), according to EEOC Project Director Marlene Toribio, we closed 237 co-filed cases.

Our contract with EEOC for FY12 was for 235 cases. For federal FY13 (ending September 30, 2013), we closed 201 co-filed cases. Our contract with EEOC for FY13 was for 199 cases. For federal FY14 (ending September 30, 2014), we closed 232 co-filed cases. Our modified contract for FY14 was for 230 cases. For federal FY15 (beginning October 1, 2014), we have closed 206 co-filed cases. Our original contract for federal FY15 was for 206 cases. EEOC recently approved an upward modification from 206 to 210 cases for our current contract. We must complete four co-filed cases by September 30 to complete our revised EEOC contract.

HUD – For FY14, we took in 49 new housing charges, 47 of which were co-filed with HUD, and we processed 51 cases, 50 of which were co-filed with HUD (three of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations). For FY15, we took in 101 new housing charges, 66 of which were co-filed with HUD. (32 were not eligible for co-filing and three were deferred to HUD for investigation.) We processed 94 cases, 65 of which were co-filed with HUD; two of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations. For FY16 (beginning July 1, 2015), we have taken in 28 new housing charges, 24 of which are (or are expected to be) co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we have processed 18 cases, ten of which were co-filed with HUD; seven

of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations.

HUD PARTNERSHIP GRANTS – Because the LGBT/Domestic Violence Victims projects came in under budget, HUD agreed to permit us to use leftover grant funds to produce a general fair housing brochure, poster and Power Point presentation for use in outreaches going forward, and to conduct five fair housing outreaches throughout the state. A general fair housing poster and brochure have been drafted and approved by HUD. We now await word on the pending “military status” amendment to the state fair housing law before proceeding with translation, printing and distribution. The military status bill was signed by the Governor and is now law. HUD has approved the final brochure and poster designs. They have been translated into five languages and are now being printed. We will schedule the requisite outreaches to complete the project.

III. PERSONNEL – No new information.

IV. OUTREACH – Refer to attached report.

V. GENERAL STATUS

●Meetings with staff members – I continue to meet monthly with individual investigative staff members to monitor case production.

●Case Closures – Refer to attached report.

In FY11, we processed 422 cases; in FY12, we processed 411 cases (approx. 3.5% decrease). For FY13, we processed 389 cases (approx. 5% decrease from FY12). For FY14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we processed 376 cases (decrease of approx. 3% from FY13). For FY15, we processed 425 cases, a 13% increase over cases processed in FY14. For FY16 (beginning July 1, 2015), we have processed 60 cases (compare to 54 cases in this same time period in FY15).

●Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission’s inventory for federal FY15 (beginning October 1, 2014).

●Overall Case Inventory – The Commission had over 1000 cases in its inventory at the end of FY 1998. We ended FY11 with 323 cases in inventory, FY12 with 255 cases, FY13 with 265 cases, and FY14 with 290 cases. As of 9/24/15, we had a total of 324 cases in inventory; eight of these cases were pending assignment.

●Affirmative Action Plan – I completed the Commission’s required annual AA Plan submission (with review by Cynthia). That Plan, due September 11 to the state Office of Diversity, Equity and Opportunity, was submitted on August 28.

●HUD Training – Frank Gaschen, Legal Counsel, attended the National HUD Training and Policy Conference in Washington, DC on September 1-3, as my designee.

●HUD Onsite/Performance Assessment – HUD conducted an onsite visit on March 16 as part of its annual performance assessment process. During the course of the on-site, HUD officials conducted staff interviews and reviewed case files. We continue to await HUD’s report/ conclusions.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Évora

Executive Director

Attachments